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ABSTRACT

The latest modifications of the policy and procedures governing the submission and review of proposals for new programs in public institutions in South Carolina are presented. In reviewing proposals for new programs, or in reviewing existing programs, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education considers the following questions: objectives of the proposed program; the need for the program and alternatives for accomplishing the desired objectives; the compatibility of the program with the mission, role, and scope of the institution; the cost of the activity; and the adequacy of personnel, facilities, library holdings, and other essentials necessary to conduct a program of high quality. Proposals should provide at least the following information: classification, justification, curriculum, students, faculty, physical plant and equipment, library resources, criteria of evaluation, estimated additional cost, and institutional approval. A sample table for presentation of a cost estimate is included. (SW)

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POLICY AND PROCEDURES CONCERNING NEW PROGRAMS

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April, 1980

South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

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PREFACE

The Commission on Higher Education has had in place since 1968 policy and procedures governing the submission and review of proposals for new programs in public institutions. This publication contains the latest modifications of the policy and procedures, adopted by the Commission in November, 1979, during the development of the South Carolina Master Plan for Higher Education. Copies are available to all who are interested.

Howard R. Boozer
Executive Director

April 10, 1980

SECTION I.

INTRODUCTION

Program review is one of the important functions a coordinating agency is called upon to perform. The essential nature of this function was recognized in the 1967 legislation creating the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, which requires approval by the Commission or the General Assembly before any new program may be implemented by a public institution of higher learning. It was re-emphasized in the 1978 legislation reorganizing the Commission, which also gave the Commission explicit authority to recommend termination of programs at public institutions.

The principal role of the Commission in program review is to reflect an objective viewpoint that is at least statewide (and, in some cases, regional or national) in scope. In reviewing proposals for new programs, or in reviewing existing programs, the Commission seeks objective viewpoints about, and specific answers to, the following five broad questions concerning each program:

1. What are the objectives of the proposed program?

2. Does the State need the program, and if so, are there alternative means of accomplishing the desired objectives?

3. Is the program compatible with the mission, role and scope of the institution?

4. How much does the activity cost, and what priority should be given it in funding?

5. Does the institution have the necessary personnel, facilities, library holdings, and other essentials necessary to conduct a program of high quality; and if not, is there a plan for acquiring these essentials?

The Commission on Higher Education recognizes the sensitive nature of this responsibility. It also recognizes its obligation to assist the institutions of the State to develop and to maintain programs of high quality, and to avoid or reduce unnecessary duplication of programs.

The Commission's policy and procedures concerning the submission and review of proposed new programs, in effect since 1968, were last amended in November, 1979, and are reproduced in this document.

SECTION II.

POLICY

1. "New Programs" requiring Commission approval shall be defined as:

   a. Offerings at any campus or other location leading to the establishment of any degree level, in any field, not previously offered; including but not limited to diplomas and certificates; and associate, baccalaureate, professional, masters, or doctoral degrees. Diploma and certificate programs at technical colleges not leading to the associate or other recognized degree are exempted.

   b. Offerings at any campus or other location, at any degree level, leading to the establishment of a new major, or a new option, specialization, concentration or postgraduate residency within a currently authorized field, where any such major, option, specialization, concentration or residency is to be publicized in any manner.

   c. Creation at any campus or other location of any Center, Bureau, Institute, or any other budgetary or administrative unit (except an academic department, school, or college), for the purposes of carrying out research, public service activities, or instruction, or any combination of the above.

2. The Commission does not require approval of the creation of new academic departments, schools or colleges within existing institutions, unless such administrative change has program implications, but requests institutions to notify the Commission promptly of such changes as may be affected.

3. Changes of program titles, without any change in objectives, purposes, or curricula, normally are not to be regarded as new programs, but such contemplated changes shall be discussed with the Commission staff prior to implementation and the Commission staff shall be notified promptly in writing as such changes may be effected.

4. Deletion of any program, or of any academic school, department or college, does not require prior Commission approval, but prompt notification of such changes shall be made to the Commission staff in writing.

5. No proposed new program may be publicized in the catalog of any institution or in any other written material prior to approval of the program by the Commission.

6. The Committee on Academic Programs will establish and maintain procedures designed to implement this policy.

SECTION III.

PROCEDURES

1. It is essential for Commission staff to have the opportunity to consult with an institution early in its consideration and planning of new programs. This is particularly important in determining whether new activities proposed may, or may not, require Commission approval; and in assisting institutional staff in drafting proposals acceptable for consideration by the Commission.

2. The Commission's standing Committee on Academic Programs is responsible for, among other things, reviewing new programs from the various institutions, and for making its recommendations as to each such proposal to the Commission for final action. The Committee will consider program proposals at quarterly meetings, to be held regularly during the first month of each quarter, i.e., July, October, January, and April. Exceptions to this procedure may be made by the Committee, in the case of justifiable emergencies.

3. No formal proposals will be considered by the Committee on Academic Programs unless the institution has previously submitted a Letter of Intent, signed by the Chief Executive Officer of the institution or system, to the Executive Director of the Commission on Higher Education.

The purpose of a Letter of Intent is to give advance notice to the Commission staff, and to the Committee on Academic Programs, of an institution's intent, at the time of writing, to propose a new program. Each Letter of Intent should be addressed only to one proposed program. A Letter of Intent should be limited to one page, describing the proposed program briefly but clearly, giving the title and a short description of the purpose of the proposed program, with an explanation of its relevance to the role and scope of the proposing institution, and the proposed implementation date.

Letters of Intent are not binding on the part of the institution in the sense that subsequent investigation by the institution may result in a change (e.g., in proposed starting date) or even cancellation of such plans. Such letters are also not binding in the sense that acknowledgement of receipt does not constitute implied approval of the subsequent proposal on the part of either the Commission staff or the Committee on Academic Programs. Since Letters of Intent are not binding, they may be submitted to the Commission prior to final internal approvals which may be necessary at the proposing institution.

A Letter of Intent may be submitted at any time but no later than 120 days prior to review of the formal program proposal by the Committee on Academic Programs. Exceptions to this requirement may be made in justifiable emergencies by the Committee.

4. The Committee, or the Commission, may seek advice and comments concerning any proposed program from disinterested parties, such as consultants or advisory groups, as the Committee may consider appropriate. In addition, there is established, advisory to the Committee, an Ad-

visory Committee on Academic Programs, to consist of the following persons ex officio:

a. a member of the Commission staff, designated by the Executive Director, who shall serve as Chairman;

b. the chief academic officer of each of the state-supported colleges and universities (the chief academic officer at the University of South Carolina shall represent not only the main campus but all of the University's branches); and

c. the Associate Executive Director for Instruction of the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education.

Program proposals, except those related to health and medical education, will be referred by the Commission staff to this Advisory Committee for advice and comment. The Advisory Committee will meet on the call of its Chairman, regular meetings to be held normally during the last month of each quarter, i.e., June, September, December, and March. A majority of the members of the Advisory Committee will constitute a quorum at any meeting. No vote shall be recorded in Advisory Committee meetings on the question of specific programs, its role in such cases being advisory only. Other appropriate questions in addition to those relative to specific proposals for new programs may be referred to the Advisory Committee for advice or action by the Chairman or by the Committee on Academic Programs.

Program proposals related to health and medical education will be referred to the Committee on Health and Medical Education and may be

referred by the Committee to the Health Education Authority for advice and comment. After appropriate review, the Committee on Health and Medical Education will provide advice, comment and recommendations on such programs to the Committee on Academic Programs for its consideration.

5. The Committee on Academic Programs, in considering proposals submitted by an institution, will invite the chief academic officer of that institution, or his designee, to appear before it in order to respond to any questions the Committee or staff may have concerning the proposal. Notice of such invitation will be made to the chief academic officer by the staff. The staff will prepare for the Committee, with a copy to the chief academic officer of the institution, in advance of its meetings, a written analysis and evaluation of proposals which are to be considered.

6. The chairman of the Committee on Academic Programs, or his designee, shall submit Committee findings and recommendations to the Commission at the appropriate time on each proposal submitted. It will continue to be the prerogative of the presidents of institutions submitting, or otherwise affected by, proposals to attend Commission meetings at which such proposals are being considered. If invited to do so by the presiding officer, any president may speak on such programs.

7. The Executive Director shall notify the chief executive officer of the institution or system promptly regarding such formal action the Commission may take on proposals.

8. An institution wishing to appeal any formal action on programs by the Commission may do so, provided a written notice of appeal stating the reason(s) therefor is submitted to the Executive Director by the President or chief executive officer of the institution within 30 days after receipt of formal notice of the Commission's action. All such appeals will be referred to the Committee which shall undertake any further study or such other action as may appear to it to be appropriate under the circumstances.

9. Proposals for new programs must be submitted in 25 copies. They should be addressed to the Executive Director of the Commission, and transmitted with a cover letter signed by the chief executive officer of the institution or system. Proposals from institutions under the aegis of the State Board for Technical Education shall be processed through and have the approval of the SBTCE prior to submission to the Commission.

10. The normal schedule of activities that are expected in accordance with these procedures is as follows:

Program Review Cycle	Letter of Intent (Due Date)	Proposal (Due Date)	Advisory Committee	Committee on Academic Programs*	Commission
Summer	Mar. 1	May 15	June	July	Aug.**
Fall	June 1	Aug. 15	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Winter	Sept. 1	Nov. 15	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.
Spring	Dec. 1	Feb. 15	Mar.	April	May

* And, for appropriate programs, Committee on Health and Medical Education
** or September

11. Proposals should provide at least the following information, presented in this format:

a. Classification

(1) Academic area or field of study; academic or budgetary unit(s) involved.

(2) Designation, type and level of degree or certificate, if pertinent.

(3) Proposed date of implementation.

(4) Suggested coding of program in USOE Taxonomy of Instructional Programs in Higher Education.

b. Justification

(1) A description of the purposes and objectives of the program.

(2) A description of the way in which the proposed program is consistent with the role and scope of the institution, and of the relationship of the proposed program to existing programs within the institution.

(3) A discussion of similarities or differences between the proposed program and those with like objectives offered at other institutions. For graduate programs, the discussion should not be limited to like programs within the state.

(4) A summary of anticipated employment opportunities for graduates, or of demand for services, of the program, quantified to the extent feasible and possible, and covering a reasonable period in the future.

c. Curriculum

(1) The provision of a sample curriculum for all undergraduate

programs and for those graduate programs which will utilize either core or required courses or both.

(2) The furnishing of catalog-type descriptions of any new courses which it may be necessary to add to the institution's catalog within at least the first three years of operation of the proposed program.

(3) If the proposed program is subject to state, regional or national program accreditation, the identification of the agency involved, a probable timetable for approval, and a brief explanation of the accreditation process.

(4) If graduates of the proposed program are subject to licensure or certification by any state, regional or national agency, a brief description of this process, including a summary of the requirements for such licensure or certification and an explanation of features of the proposed program that will assist students in meeting these requirements.

d. Students

(1) The identification of the student population to be served, or the pool(s) from which prospective applicants are expected to be drawn, including an explanation of the basis, and sources, of all assumptions.

(2) Description of enrollment forecasts, by means of a Table showing the estimated enrollment, by level, for at least the first three years of operation. This Table must show the estimated enrollment by headcount, full-time and full-time equivalent categories. For all three categories, the figures in the Table should indicate whether and to what extent these students, by year, are

expected to be new enrollees attracted to the institution by virtue of the program. The rationale for all estimates must be explained.

e. Faculty

(1) The provision of a Table showing, for at least the first three years, the numbers of faculty and administrators by rank to be utilized in the program. New faculty required and currently-employed faculty (or administrators) are to be enumerated separately in this Table. The numbers in the Table should be given in full-time equivalents and the institutional definition of that term cited.

(2) In the case of currently-employed faculty (or administrators), an explanation in detail of how the proposed change in assignment is to be accomplished and of whether or not such changes may require the employment of additional people to assume the current duties of these.

(3) A statement of the academic qualifications of present faculty as they relate to the proposed program, and a description of the academic qualifications of any new faculty being requested as a result of the proposed program.

(4) If applicable, a statement of the institutional plan for faculty development as it may relate to the proposed program, including released time for research, consulting, conferences, and workshops.

f. Physical Plant and Equipment

(1) An explanation of whether or to what extent the existing phy-

sical plant will be adequate to provide space for the program, for at least the first three years. If additional physical plant requirements will be induced, for any foreseeable period, or if substantial modification of existing facilties will be required, explain how these are to be financed.

(2) The identification of major equipment items which may be needed for at least the first three years. Normal acquisitions of commonly-used items for instruction and research may be excluded.

g. Library Resources

(1) A comparison of the institution's current holdings in the subject field with a standard guideline appropriate to the program proposed.

(2) A quantitative estimate of the additional holdings, if any, needed to meet the guideline, and an explanation of how these additions will be made (i.e., by "normal" or "special" acquisition programs).

h. Criteria of Evaluation

(1) Specific criteria by which the institution believes the performance and quality of the program should be judged by the Commission, and the time frame which should apply to any such proposed review.

i. Estimated Additional Cost

(1) The preparation of a Table showing the estimated additional or incremental cost to the institution if the program is im-

plemented as proposed. This Table should be in the form shown below, suitably altered by circumstances of the proposal.

(2) An explanation of any financial support which is in hand or reasonably anticipated from any source for the first three years, other than state appropriations or student fees. Indicate how the proposed program would be funded upon expiration of such support.

j. Institutional Approval

Citation of the names, and dates, of approval of the program by internal institutional committees or councils and by the institutional governing board where applicable; together with provisions or stipulations which have not been accommodated.

Sample Table for Presentation of Cost Estimate

Estimated Additional Cost

Item	19XX-19XX	19XX-19XX	19XX-19XX
Salaries			
Administrators (No.)			
Faculty (No.)			
Clerical (No.)			
Other (No.)			
Equipment and Supplies			
Travel, Telephone, etc.			
Library			
Physical Plant and Major Equipment			
Other (specify)			
TOTAL			